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TAGS: PREL NATO MOPS MARR AF SI

SUBJECT: SLOVENIA AGREES WITH USG'S NEW APPROACH IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: A. SECSTATE 15623

1B. SECDEF 241923Z FEB 09

Classified By: ADCM G. Shelton, Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

11. (C) ADCM met with MFA Security Policy Division Chief Stanislav Vidovic on February 24 and with MOD Deputy Director General of Defense Planning Primoz Savc on February 26 to: outline the "anchor points" of the Afghanistan-Pakistan review; seek Slovenia's input for the strategy review; and encourage Slovenia to consider how it can join us in increasing civilian and military contributions (ref A). Vidovic said Slovenia supported the USG's new approach and agreed with the regional concept and most of the anchor points. Vidovic stressed that we needed to broaden the responsibilities - ISAF was only one pillar of stabilizing Iraq; we should find a way to link the efforts of ISAF, the UN, and the EU. He suggested that the EU should be more active and worried that the member states were not able to follow the needs of EUPOL on the ground quickly enough.

12. (C) Vidovic cited Defense Minister Jelusic's February 19 meeting with Secretary of Defense Gates during which she outlined Slovenia's plans for Afghanistan (ref B). Vidovic and Savc both reviewed Slovenia's contributions to Afghanistan: 70 soldiers, with the number of soldiers participating in an OMLT increasing to 10. Savc explained that the MoD was exploring whether Slovenia could take over an OMLT within two years. Each confirmed that Slovenia planned to send up to 15 people to an Information Operations team for the elections. They also said that Slovenia would like to be more present in PRTs and planned to have at least three to five people in PRTs until 2012. Vidovic added that it currently had two civil military cooperation civilians at the Italian PRT in Herat who were exploring how Slovenia could contribute more to PRTs. He noted that while Slovenia was not looking to take over a PRT, it would start and fund some projects over the next few months. Although he doubted that these projects would have a big effect, Slovenia still wanted to be present in a PRT. In discussing Slovenia's contributions to Afghanistan, Vidovic stressed that Slovenia would continue to be very involved in the Western Balkans, which it sees as its first priority.

FREDEN